Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) <u>A data terminal equipment for use in</u> ~~In~~ an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to <u>said</u> ~~a~~ data terminal equipment <u>which is</u> placed on an information <u>user's</u> ~~users~~ side for retrieving the content data through a communications network, said data terminal equipment comprising:

an index retrieval part <u>operable to retrieve</u> ~~for retrieving~~ index data indicating <u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data <u>prior to retrieving the content data</u>;

an authentication part <u>operable to authenticate the</u> ~~for authenticating said~~ content data <u>by using</u> ~~based on~~ the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part; and

a content retrieval part <u>operable to transmit a retrieval request</u> for retrieving <u>the</u> <u>authenticated</u> ~~said~~ content data <u>to the</u> ~~from said~~ server only if said authentication part has confirmed authenticity of the ~~said~~ content data<u>, and to receive the authenticated content data</u> <u>from the server.</u>

2. (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, wherein

<u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

<u>the</u> ~~said~~ index data includes embedded data which is embedded with <u>the</u> ~~said~~ locator as an electronic watermark and to which <u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data is linked, and

said authentication part comprises:

an extraction part <u>operable to extract,</u> ~~for extracting,~~ as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part,

a text locator extraction part <u>operable to extract,</u> ~~for extracting,~~ as a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data from the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part if said extraction part has successfully extracted the watermark locator,

a check part <u>operable to determine</u> ~~for determining~~ whether the text locator extracted by said text locator extraction part matches with the watermark locator extracted by said extraction part, and

an authenticity confirmation part <u>operable to confirm</u> ~~for confirming~~ the authenticity of <u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data only if said check part determines that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

3

3. (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, wherein

the ~~said~~ content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

the ~~said~~ index data includes embedded data embedded with the ~~said~~ locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authentication part comprises:

an extraction part operable to extract, ~~for extracting,~~ as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part, and

an authenticity confirmation part operable to confirm ~~for confirming~~ the authenticity of the ~~said~~ content data if said extraction part has successfully extracted the watermark locator.

4. (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, further comprising:

a display part operable to display ~~for displaying~~ a predetermined warning if said authentication part has not confirmed the authenticity of the ~~said~~ content data.

5. (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to claim 2, wherein the ~~said~~ embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

6. (Currently Amended) In an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side through a communications network, a method of retrieving the content data by the ~~said~~ data terminal equipment, said method comprising:

~~a step of~~ retrieving index data indicating the ~~said~~ content data prior to retrieving the content data;

~~a step of~~ authenticating the ~~said~~ content data by using ~~based on~~ the index data retrieved in said ~~index~~ retrieving ~~step~~; and

~~a step of~~ transmitting a retrieval request for retrieving the ~~said~~ content data to the ~~from~~ said server only if authenticity of the ~~said~~ content data has been confirmed in the authenticating, and of receiving the authenticated content from the server ~~step~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to claim 6, wherein,

4

the ~~said~~ content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

the ~~said~~ index data includes embedded data which is embedded with the ~~said~~ locator as an electronic watermark and to which the ~~said~~ content data is linked, and

said authenticating ~~step~~ further comprises:

~~a step of~~ extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said ~~index~~ retrieving ~~step~~,

~~a step of~~ extracting, as a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data from the index data retrieved in said ~~index~~ retrieving ~~step~~ if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said watermark locator extracting ~~step~~,

~~a checking step of~~ determining whether the text locator extracted in said text locator extracting ~~step~~ matches with the watermark locator extracted in said watermark locator extracting ~~step~~, and

~~a step of~~ authenticating the ~~said~~ content data only if it is determined in said determining ~~checking step~~ that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

8. (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to claim 6, wherein,

the ~~said~~ content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

the ~~said~~ index data includes embedded data embedded with the ~~said~~ locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authenticating ~~step~~ further comprises:

~~a step of~~ extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving ~~step~~, and

~~a step of~~ confirming the authenticity of the ~~said~~ content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in the ~~said~~ extracting step.

9. (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to claim 6, further comprising

~~a step of~~ displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of the ~~said~~ content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating ~~step~~.

5

10. (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to claim 7, wherein the said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

11. (Currently Amended) A recording medium having a program stored therein, said program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data stored therein through a communications network, the said program data terminal equipment readable instructions being operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to perform the method comprising:

a step of retrieving index data indicating the said content data prior to retrieving the content data;

a step of authenticating the said content data by using based on the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step; and

a step of transmitting a retrieval request for retrieving the said content data to the from said server only if authenticity of the said content data has been confirmed in said authenticating, and of receiving the authenticated content data from the server step.

12. (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein the said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

the said index data includes embedded data which is embedded with the said locator as an electronic watermark and to which the said content data is linked, and

said authenticating step further comprises:

a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step,

a step of extracting, as a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data from the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said watermark locator extracting step,

a checking step of determining whether the text locator extracted in said text locator extracting step matches with the watermark locator extracted in said watermark locator extracting step, and

6

a step of authenticating the said content data only if it is determined in said determining checking step that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

13. (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein

the said content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

the said index data includes embedded data that is embedded with the said locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authenticating step further comprises:

a step of extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step, and

a step of confirming the authenticity of the said content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting step.

14. (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein

the data terminal equipment readable instructions are said program further operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to comprises:

display a step of displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of the said content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating step.

15. (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to claim 12, wherein

the said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

16. (Currently Amended) A program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data stored therein through a communications network, said program data terminal equipment readable instructions being operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to perform the method comprising:

a step of retrieving index data indicating the said content data prior to retrieving the content data;

a step of authenticating the said content data by using based on the index data retrieved in said index retrieving step; and

transmitting a retrieval request for a step of retrieving the said content data to the from

7

~~said~~ server only if authenticity of the said content data has been confirmed in <u>said</u> authenticating<u>, and of receiving the authenticated content data from the server step</u>.

17. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 16, wherein

<u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

<u>the</u> ~~said~~ index data includes embedded data embedded with <u>the</u> ~~said~~ locator as an electronic watermark and linked to <u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data, and

said authenticating ~~step~~ further comprises:

~~a step of~~ extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved said ~~index~~ retrieving ~~step~~,

~~a step of~~ extracting, as a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data from the index data retrieved in said ~~index~~ retrieving ~~step~~ if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said <u>watermark</u> <u>locator</u> extracting ~~step~~,

~~a checking step of~~ determining whether the text locator extracted in said text locator extracting ~~step~~ matches with the watermark locator extracted in said <u>watermark locator</u> extracting ~~step~~, and

~~a step of~~ authenticating <u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data only if it is determined in said <u>determining</u> ~~checking step~~ that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

18. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 16, wherein

<u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

<u>the</u> ~~said~~ index data includes embedded data embedded with <u>the</u> ~~said~~ locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authenticating ~~step~~ further comprises:

~~a step of~~ extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved said ~~index~~ retrieving ~~step~~, and

~~a step of~~ confirming the authenticity of <u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting ~~step~~.

8

19. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 16, further comprising ~~a step of~~ displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of <u>the</u> ~~said~~ content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating ~~step~~.

20. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 17, wherein <u>the</u> ~~said~~ embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

21. (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to claim 3, wherein <u>the</u> ~~said~~ embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

22. (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to claim 8, wherein <u>the</u> ~~said~~ embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

23. (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to claim 13, wherein the said embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

24. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 18, wherein <u>the</u> ~~said~~ embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

25. (New) The data terminal equipment according to claim 16, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

26. (New) The data retrieval method according to claim 6, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

27. (New) The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

28. (New) The program according to claim 6, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.